

10 April 1981

Operations

REPORTING AN ERRANT MISSILE OR SPACE OBJECT

This regulation prescribes requirements and procedures for reporting errant missiles or space objects to the National Military Command Center (NMCC) or NORAD Launch Correlation Unit (LCU) in support of the US/USSR accident measures agreement. It applies to the Space and Missile Test Organization (SAMTO) and the Air Force Satellite Control Facility (AFSCF).

1. SAMTO and AFSCF will be responsible for alerting and informing NMCC, NORAD Launch Correlation Unit (LCU) and Space Division Command Post in the event of an errant missile or space object.
2. Definitions of vehicle and space terminology:
  - a. Nominal Ascent. An orbital vehicle which achieves pre-planned velocity and trajectory at loss-of-signal from range sensors.
  - b. Nominal Vehicle. A launch vehicle which achieves its pre-planned parameters.
  - c. Non-Nominal Vehicle. A launch vehicle which fails to achieve its pre-planned trajectory, but its vacuum predicted impact point remains within range impact limit lines.
  - d. Errant Launch. Launch vehicle which fails to achieve its predicted pre-planned trajectory, cannot be destroyed, and its predicted vacuum impact point can reasonably be assumed to be outside range impact limit lines.
  - e. Reportable Event. An errant launch will constitute a Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT) reportable event

if a domestic missile or satellite vehicle may impact, overfly or come within 100 nautical miles of the Soviet Union, and which might appear as a threat vehicle. Assessment as to whether or not an errant launch could appear as a threat to the Soviet Union is the responsibility of the NORAD LCU.

3. SAMTO and AFSCF will set up procedures to promptly notify NMCC of an errant missile or space object. SAMTO will put these procedures in an Operations Directive. AFSCF has established them in AFSCFR 55-2, Vol III. Procedures will include the following:

- a. Name or duty title of responsible reporting official.
- b. Military unit responsible for reporting.
- c. Identification by Inter-Range Operations Number (IRON) or Operation Number (Opn Nr) of ballistic or space object.
- d. Time of occurrence (GMT).
- e. Site of occurrence in terms of azimuth and range relative to the launch site, geographical area or the last available object state vector (numerical date which define the satellite path).
- f. Predicted impact point if known or applicable.
- g. Remarks to include probability of impact in USSR or Warsaw Pact territory. (This will be the most precise information available and may be reported in general terms rather than a numerical probability.)

4. SAMTO will provide this information direct to the NMCC using voice communications. As soon as time permits, the same information will be reported, by voice, through AFSC Command Post channels.

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(See signature page for summary of changes.)

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5. AFSCF will provide this information to NORAD by Launch Correlation Unit dedicated voice circuits or GP AUTOVON.

6. SANTO will transmit a follow-up message by FLASH precedence to NMCC, with info addressees: USAF, AFSC, and SD.

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SUMMARY OF CHANGES

Revised to include launch correlation report. Defines nominal, non-nominal, errant launches and reportable events.